

Claims in contention:

This is **not** a listing of claims. This copy of Claim 5 is presented for convenience sake.

**Claim 5** (*Previously Presented*): A method for configuring a Programmably-Sliceable Switch-fabric Unit (PSSU) having a capability of functioning as an  $N \times N'$  crossbar, where said PSSU also has a capability of being programmably sliced to instead function as a plurality of  $S \times S'$  virtual switch slices, where  $S < N$  and  $S' < N'$ , where the PSSU includes absolute Ingress ports ( $aI$ 's) and absolute Egress ports ( $aE$ 's) that are alternatively identifiable as Relative ingress ports ( $Ri$ 's) and Relative egress ports ( $Re$ 's) of respective ones of said virtual switch slices; where the  $aI$ 's can receive routing requests and payloads that are to be routed, and where the  $aE$ 's can output routed payloads to corresponding destinations; and where said configuring method comprises:

(a) programming **the** PSSU to be sliced such that its plural virtual slices are **intermingled** to provide **effective uncrossings** of ingress and/or egress signal lines of the PSSU.